



Volume 13
Number 3

FALL 2001

www.magiclanternsociety.org

MAGIC LANTERN CONVENTION 2002 IN ROCHESTER NEW YORK

By Ed Lennert

The 2002 MLS Convention has been scheduled for June 28th, 29th, and 30th in Rochester, New York. Already scheduled is a visit to the George Eastman House Museum with its huge collection of lanterns, unusual mechanical slides, early motion picture devices, and an extensive library including many magic lantern related materials. A special dinner cruise on the historic Erie Cannel has also been planned. We will of course continue our oldest tradition of having the "Grand Auction" on the last day. All the presentations, shows, and the auction will be held at Monroe Community College, the site of the first MLS Convention in 1986.

A limited number of rooms have been booked directly across from the college at the Brighton Courtyard Marriott. A special rate of \$86-89 has been reserved for conference attendees. A Thursday night welcome is being planned for those of you who arrive early. Call 1-800-321-2211 for reservations.

Since there are numerous attractions to visit within short driving distance of Rochester, attendees may want to schedule an extra day or two for sightseeing. The Strong Museum is one of the largest toy and doll museums in the world, complete with a well-documented selection of magic lanterns, transfer slides, and optical toys. Larry Rakow has given his magic lantern show at this museum. The Genesee County Village is a restored Nineteenth Century village similar to Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. Terry Borton has given his magic lantern shows at this village. The Susan B. Anthony House and Museum is a monument to the birth of the women's suffrage movement, a subject of a number of lantern slide sets. And of course, if you haven't seen it, there is a Niagara Falls and Canada about a 90-minute drive away from Rochester. The Falls have always been a favorite subject for both stereo and lantern slide views. Rochester also has its historic falls complete with a laser light show which can be seen from many of the area's restaurants. Many of the attractions can be viewed on their own web sites or try www.visitrochester.com.

Rochester is served by the Rochester International Airport and the Buffalo International Airport about 60-minutes to the west and close to Niagara Falls. If traveling by car, the New York State Thruway (Interstate 90) runs directly through Rochester.

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Several people have already expressed an interest in making a presentation or giving a show. However, others are needed. We would like to keep most presentations to under 40 minutes. Suggestions on agenda or conference activities are also requested. For information write: Ed Lennert, 96 Lac Kine Drive, Rochester, New York 14618, USA; or telephone 716-461-3608 or email elennert@aol.com.



DEEP IN THE HEART OF MAGIC LANTERN COUNTRY

By Erkki Huhtamo

I recently returned from a trip to San Antonio, my second one within a year. Although most people might wonder what attracts a Finnish professor, who only recently settled down in Los Angeles, to this city "deep in the heart of Texas," for us magic lantern enthusiasts there is nothing to explain. Of course, I wanted to have a second look at the Magic Lantern Castle Museum, Jack Judson's impressive homage to the art of projection. My first visit was an eye-opener, but it only made me want to see, and learn more.

When it was opened in the spring of 1992, The Magic Lantern Castle was the only museum in the world dedicated solely to the history of the magic lantern. In a sense it still is, although other museums based on private collections have since been opened in Italy (Padova) and in Spain (Girona). Yet these museums display magic lanterns as just one category among many, in their attempt to sketch the general development of "pre-cinema" (or the "early history of the moving image," as I prefer to call it).

The focus of the Magic Lantern Castle is different: there are no phenakistiscopes, anamorphoses, peepshow boxes, or camera obscuras in the Judson collection, begun in 1985-86. Jack has always concentrated his attention on magic lanterns, slides, broadsides, and all kinds of accessories associated with the culture of projected images. The decision is conscious, of course, and has led to an important discovery;



the amazing breadth and richness of the magic lantern culture has been made visible really for the first time.

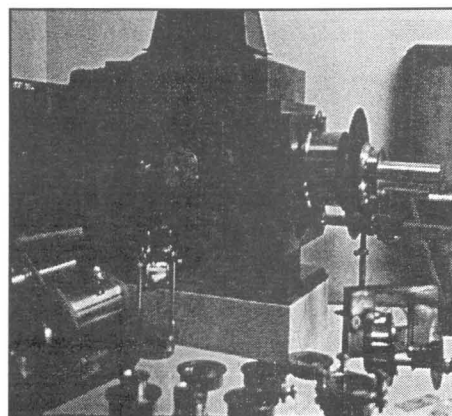
We are not talking about little nostalgic toys to project images on the wall of the nursery, like the ones recollected by Ingmar Bergman or Marcel Proust; historically toy lanterns were always a side issue (although they are by no means absent from the Castle). We are talking about history, folk culture, science, industry, business, entertainment, visual education, fraternities, even political life—all these strands meet at the artifact known as the magic lantern.

On the Border of the Lantern Culture

Having said all this, I must immediately admit that the Magic Lantern Castle does display items that in a sense mark the borders of the magic lantern culture. There is, for example, a magnificent Lubin Cineograph and Stereopticon (circa 1898), an early combined machine for projecting both films and lantern slides. As a contemporary broadside, displayed with the item tells us, such projectors were also used for "Stereo-

Cineograph" shows, with musical accompaniment played back from "Zonophone" records; two such extremely rare records are shown with the machine.

Another rare "hybrid" device is Brenkert's "Master Brenograph F-7," an enormous and complex special projector used in many movie palaces of the silent era. The master



Brenograph was said to "project anything but movies," including advertising and songs slides, and all kinds of visual effects. Very few of them survive today. The one Jack has, nearly complete, has been put together from partially surviving examples from New York, St. Louis, and the Majestic Theatre in San Antonio. There is also an elaborate "solar lantern" (a projection device which instead of artificial light used sunlight as the illuminant) by the Macintosh Battery and Optical Company and a large selection of opaque (postcard) projectors, like Mirrosopes and Radiopticons.

The main items, however, are the magic lanterns themselves (about 250 on display and about as many in the

The Gazette

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A publication

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Magic Lantern

Society of the United

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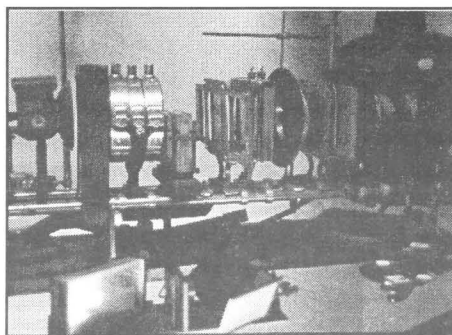
storage), as well as the mechanical and the still slides. Examples of all the main types of mechanical slides, including Wheels of Life, Choreutoscopes, and a Cycloidotrope, are on display. There is also an illuminated "kiosk" with examples of different types of still slides, including a coming attraction slide of William Wellman's silent film *Wings*, filmed in San Antonio. The slides on display are, however, just a minimal sample of the collection which includes many thousands of them (since my first visit some 20,000 new ones had arrived!). Exhibition space permitting, it would be wonderful to see even more in the future.

Lanterns, European and American

Remarkable lanterns are too numerous to mention. There is a very special late Eighteenth Century European metal lantern with a set of hand-painted long slides, and an extremely rare French Molteni bi-unial, of the type used in early anaglyphic stereo projections. Then there is Jack's magnificent British Tri-unial (attributed to Hughes), complete with its box, five sets of lenses (from 4 to 12 inches) and a perfectly preserved limelight system. Jack also has a rare British C & F Darker (London) bi-unial with special kaleidoscope lenses. There is also a whole section of toy lanterns with the German "Factory Building"

(attributed to Carrette) and "Pagoda" lanterns among the highlights.

For European eyes, however, it is the American lanterns that make the greatest impression. Even the best European magic lantern experts seem to have a very fragmentary and vague idea about the nature and extent of the American magic lantern culture. A couple of lantern makers are known by name; there are some lanterns in European private collections, but that's about it. Very little research has been done about the relationship between American and European magic lantern cultures, or even about the export and import of lanterns in both directions. Yet perhaps it should be added that not even the Americans seem to know the history of their own magic lantern culture perfectly; in the short time I have spent



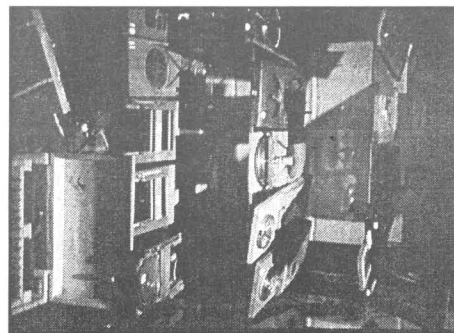
in the USA I have found numerous gaps in the existing knowledge.

Although American lantern manufacturing evidently took off somewhat later than the European, in the second half of the Nineteenth Century there were numerous companies, such as L.J. March, T.H. McAllister, J.B. Colt., J.W. Queen, M.C. Lilley, McIntosh Battery and Optical Company, A.D. Handy, and Pettibone Bros. (to name just a few), manufacturing and/or selling professional lanterns. Following in the footsteps of Marcy's revolutionary Sciopticon (about 1870), many of these lanterns had impressive technical qualities and design features that made them distinguishable from their European

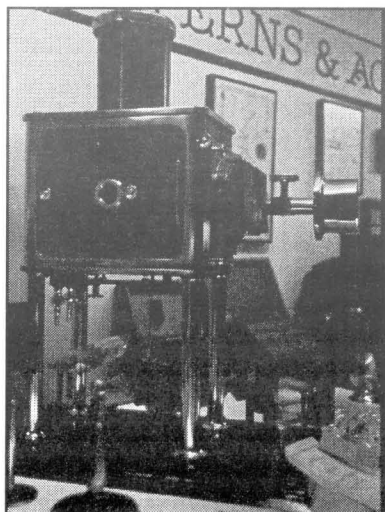
counterparts. There were also high quality science lanterns, such as demonstrated by the magnificent and rare example by George Wale, a "Philosophical Instrument Maker" from Hoboken, New Jersey, in the Judson Collection.

What's Special in American lanterns?

American lanterns are often more "structural," practical, and "streamlined" than the European ones. Not only are they lighter (made of metal instead of wood and provided with bellows instead of a heavy brass tube), they often consist of interchangeable parts, which obviously reflects the early development of rationalized industrial manufacturing processes in the USA. Many American lanterns can be quickly dismantled into their component parts, so that they can be transported in compact boxes and broken parts can easily be replaced. Features like the light source and the lens-attachments are visible to the outside rather than hidden "inside." The lanterns are often nicked which gives them a surprisingly modern look. Single lanterns, built upon rod-like structures, can also be easily piled up to form bi-unials and even tri-unials (there is a representative American tri-unial in Jack's storage waiting for its resurrection).



Yet this is only one side of the American lantern production. There are also aesthetically stunning, large, and heavy decorative masterpieces produced by Pettibone Bros. (Cincinnati, Ohio) and the McIntosh Bat-

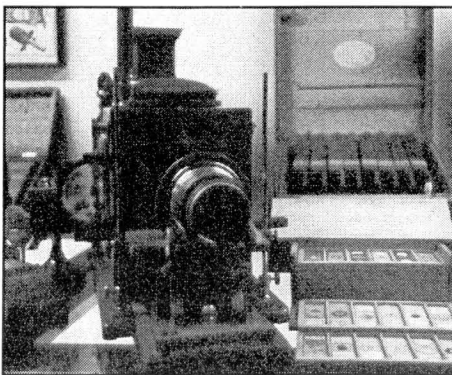


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Deep in the Heart of Magic lantern Country continued

tery and Optical Company (Chicago). Such lanterns have been nicknamed "Peacock" referring to their characteristic rotating metal framed "picture wheels." While such lanterns are extremely rare in European collections, The Magic Lantern Castle Museum demonstrates that they were not one-of-a-kind curiosities, as dazzled Europeans sometimes seem to believe. There was a large production, and many different models (such as Pettibone's "The Monarch Electric Sciopicon" and "The Victor") created, one more sumptuous than the other!

The Magic Lantern Castle reveals the context in which such lanterns were used: they were ritual objects (which explains their visual "magic") used by secret societies in their meeting halls. Secret societies provided a significant marketplace for American lantern and slide manufacturers and distributors, as is proven by the thick mail order catalogues by retailers serving exclusively these societies. Many have been preserved in the Castle's archives. Jack's displays of these extraordinary magic lanterns have been beautifully contextualized by ritual dresses, banners, and regalia. Although hundreds, perhaps thousands of different lantern slides for the secret societies are known, this "magic lantern subculture" would require much further research. Also it would be interesting to know to which extent the European lodges used lanterns in their rituals.



Great Plans.

The Magic Lantern Castle Museum actually consists of two buildings, surrounded by a fence and a large parking lot. Its landmark, a gigantic lantern on top of a pole, standing by the roadside can be seen from afar. The first building, a former pizzeria, houses the museum, a guest apartment, and Jack's fully provided workshop for lantern restoration. The second building contains Jack's office, a library, and an archive; there is also a huge warehouse full of spare parts and more or less sad-looking lanterns waiting for their resurrection.

Jack has done much research on the proper restoration of lanterns and even published a detailed guidebook on the topic ("A Guide to Restoration and Preservation of Magic Lanterns and Lantern Slides for the Caring Collector", The Magic Lantern Castle Museum, 1998). Although there are different opinions about restoring antique objects, some collectors preferring to leave the items more or less as they were found, it has to be admitted that many of Jack's restorations have been accomplished with skill and taste. In addition to displaying and preserving lanterns, Jack is involved in storing and distributing information about them. The constantly growing library and archive is a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding more about magic lantern culture.

Jack would also like his museum to develop into a meeting point for magic lantern enthusiasts. To celebrate the museum's opening, the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada held their convention there in 1992. The Movie Machine Society has gathered there twice, in 1996 and 1999. For groups of visitors, Jack gives lantern shows and demonstrates the functioning of the different illuminants, including a rare treat; the burning of limelight.

For these demonstrations, the museum's wonderfully rich display of equipment for scientific projections (containing, among other treasures, a British lantern microscope attributed to the legendary J.B. Dancer) provides the proper background.

Jack has also designed new lantern illuminants, adopted by most American professional lanternists, for example Terry Borton, who uses the system in both his tri-unial and bi-unial lanterns. The "Judson Design" uses quartz halogen lamps with very special dichroic coated glass sheets that keep the heat from damaging the fragile slide. The glass filters away both infrared and ultraviolet light, but still produces great brilliance. Jack has also experimented with light in his museum design. There is a full-sized diorama of a domestic Victorian lantern show. The light has been led to the metal lantern (still containing its oil burner) from a hidden light source by means of fiberoptic cables.

While many fellow collectors keep hiding their treasures, admiring them (and perhaps themselves?) behind closed doors or by moonlight, Jack has made everything public, also for researchers. Not only has he built an extraordinary museum and resource, he has also become a one-man information center, answering countless e-mail messages and letters. The museum website has already been visited by more than 35,000 people.

Yet Jack has even greater plans; besides planning an extension to the museum building, housing a combined magic lantern theatre and lecture hall, he is engaged in producing several books—about touring lanternists, the Japanese lantern culture, magic lantern patents, and the history of the magic lantern enterprise in the United States. All this will surely keep Jack fully occupied in the foreseeable future, cultivating the fertile soil of the Magic Lantern Country.



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For description of this and other Sciopticons, send for our Illustrated Blue Lodge Catalogue No. 75.

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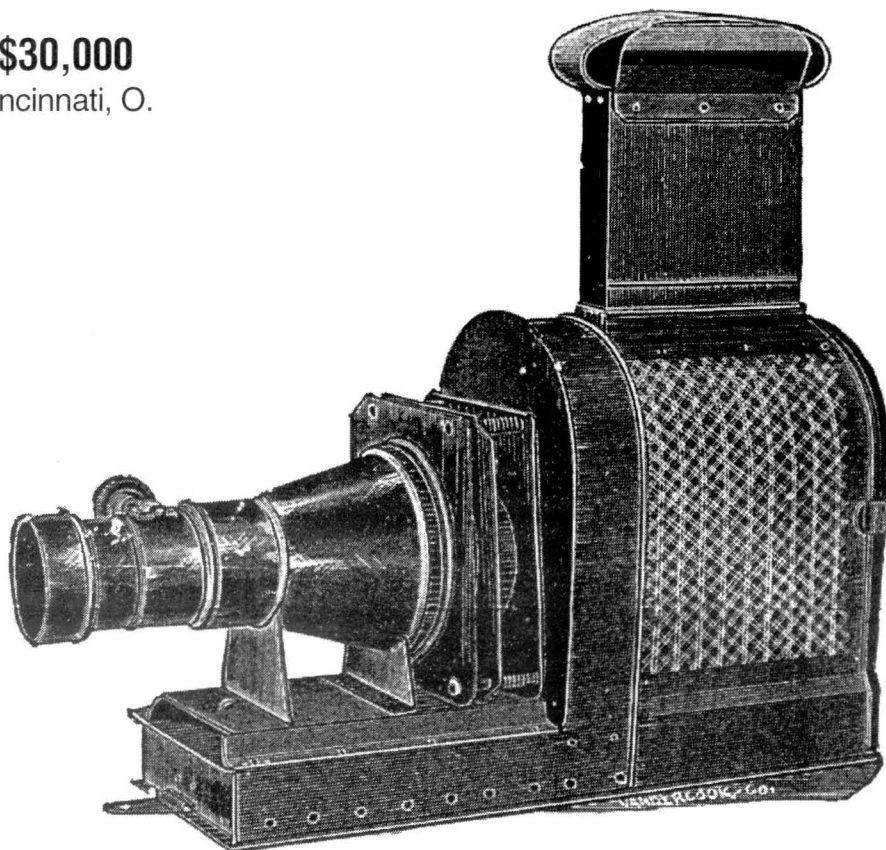
1. Holy Bible, Square, Compass and Warrant.
2. Ancient Lodge in Valley
3. Form of Lodge
4. Supports of Lodge
5. Jacob's Ladder
6. Furniture of Lodge
7. Ornaments of Lodge
8. Lights of Lodge
9. Jewels of Lodge
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11. St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist
12. Masonic Tenets
13. Points of Entrance
14. Chalk, Charcoal and Clay

Fellow Craft's Degree:

15. Pillars of the Porch
16. Five Orders of Architecture
17. The Five Senses
18. Seven Liberal Arts
19. Scene at Waterfall
20. Corn, Wine and Oil
21. Allusion to the Letter G

Master Mason's Degree:

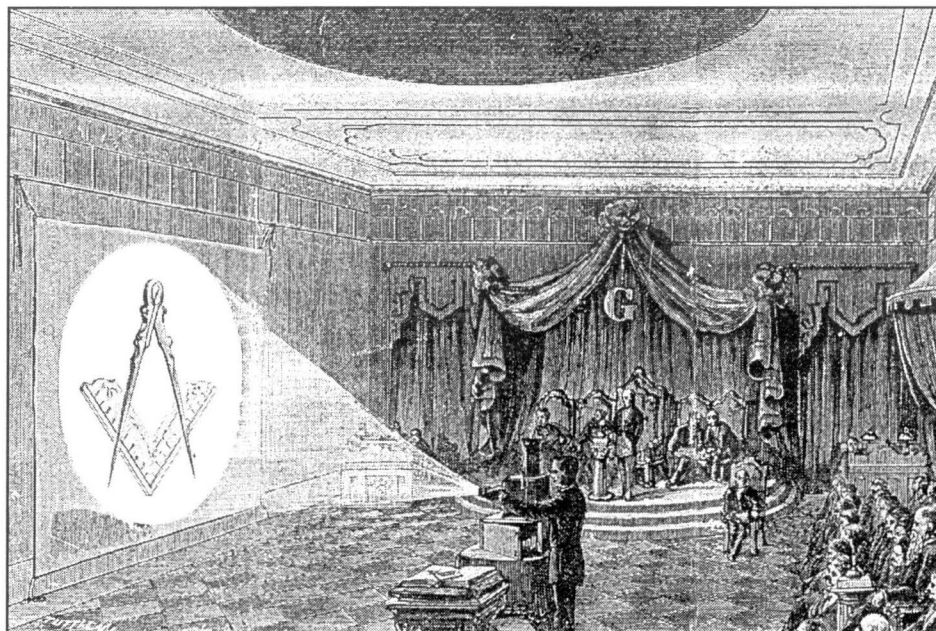
22. Building of King Solomon's Temple
23. Marble Monument
24. Ancient Three Grand Masters
25. Entered Apprentice's Lodge
26. Fellowcraft's Lodge
27. Master Mason's Lodge
28. Three Steps
29. Pot of Incense
30. Bee-hive
31. Book of Constitution Guarded by Tyler's Sword
32. Sword Pointing at Naked Heart,



- and All Seeing Eye
33. Anchor and Ark
34. Forty-seventh Problem
35. The Hour-glass
36. The Scythe
37. Emblems of Mortality

Per Slide . . . Net, \$1.50
Per Set of 37 . . . Net, \$55.00

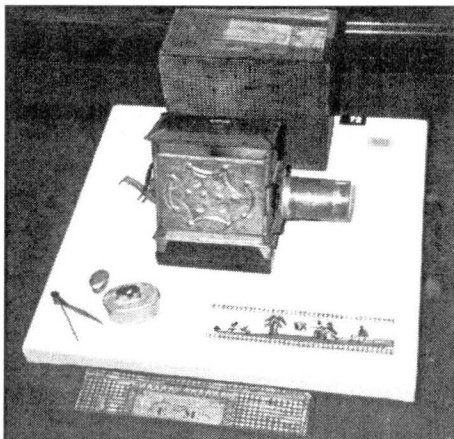
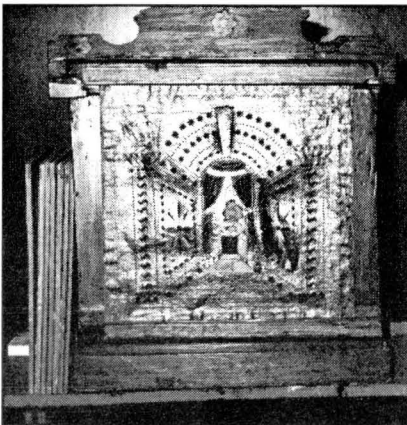
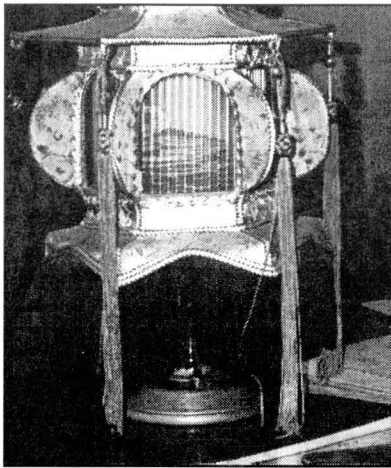
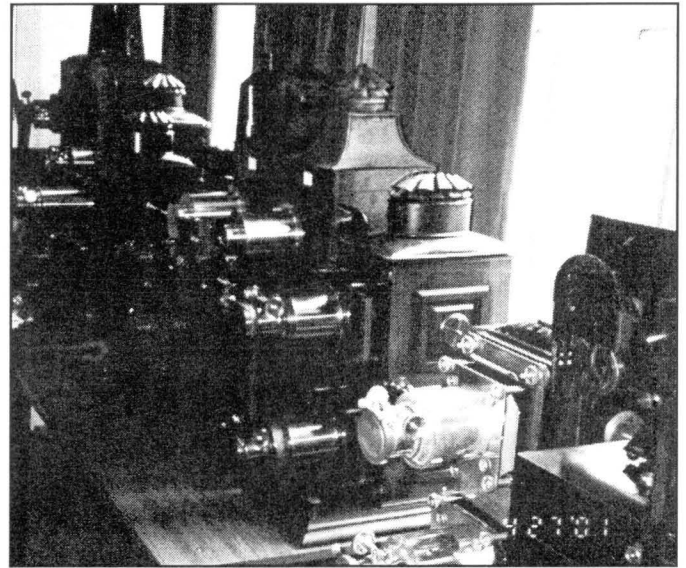
Illustration of Magic Lantern, showing views in Lodge Room.
The Pettibone M'F'G Co., Cincinnati, Ohio



THE OTHER MAGIC LANTERN SOCIETY CONVENTION

By Sue Hall

The editors were fortunate in attending the convention of the other Magic Lantern Society in Birmingham, UK in April. We had a wonderful time and have included some photographs of the Grand Exhibition. We hope to have a brief write-up of the convention in the next issue (as soon as Sue finds her notes).



THE MAGIC LANTERN SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA FINANCIAL REPORT - AUGUST 12, 2001

BEGINNING BALANCE \$6782.19

Income

Membership dues 220.00
Bank interest 2.89

TOTAL INCOME: 222.89

Expense

Gazette 394.31
Membership books
Printing 266.17
Postage 182.70
Misc. 67.90
516.77

TOTAL EXPENSES: 911.08

BALANCE AUGUST 11, 2001 \$6094.00

MAGIC LANTERN RELATED INTERNET SITES

By David Evans (who spent a few months at the computer . . .)

As many of you, being computer literate will know, the Internet hosts a myriad of sites covering every subject you can imagine, and some covering subjects you cannot possibly imagine! Pursuing the Magic Lantern theme, I have found a number of relevant sites and hope that other people might also enjoy visiting them. Just in case you are new to computers, it is essential that URLs (addresses!) must be typed into your browser's search window *exactly* as they appear below, or they probably won't work. Punctuation is as important as the words, though generally you can leave out the 'http://' as most browsers will be happy without it. I have not included sites which are simply commercial vendors—obviously there is a lot of gear available at places like eBay and other auction sites, and there are dealer-operated sites for lantern material as well. Should anybody want to know about some of these, they could be grouped together on another occasion. I have included a couple of commercial sites where the material is likely to be useful for decorative or research purposes (thinking of Stephen Herbert's Projection Box site, where he sells specialist literature for collectors, much of it written by himself or resulting from his research).

The list below is not intended to be comprehensive, and is not arranged in any particular order, except possibly in the order in which I found them! I feel sure I have left some out, and if yours is one I can only apologize. Please don't feel affronted—just write to the editors and I am sure your site will be included in a future issue of this organ. Similarly, several sites have probably appeared since I wrote this—maybe the editors could instigate a column in the journal where useful site addresses could be added on a regular basis?

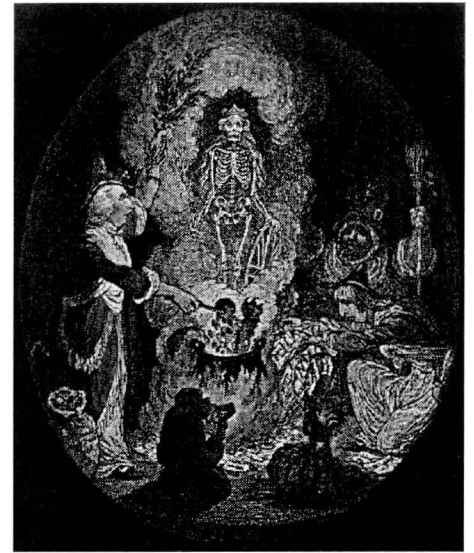
<http://members.aol.com/larrykench/index.html>

This is the truly awesome site of Society member, professional showman, and the World's Tallest Phrenologist, Larry Kench—er, sorry, Henry Clark from New York. Judging by the site he is a consummate web site designer, too. The site is a virtual magic lantern show, complete with effects, moving slides, dissolves, and everything you could expect to see in a 'real' show. Get yourself a laptop computer, a Satellite Internet connection, a digital projector, and a screen and you need never again carry heavy gear around to give shows! Not only all that, but it covers the history of the lantern in a humorous and entertaining manner that is nevertheless factual.



The American Magic Lantern Theater
<http://www.magiclanternshows.com/>

I have yet to find anything that Terry Borton does not do superbly, and his American Magic Lantern Theater site is quite in keeping with his great showmanship! Everything you need to know about the AML Theater, where its next performances are, etc. Keep an eye on it!



Professor Heard's
Magic Lantern Shows

<http://www.heard.supanet.com/>
From the UK, 'Professor' Mervyn Heard is well-known throughout the Magic Lantern world as one of only a handful of professional magic lantern showmen. He is currently studying for a Doctorate in magic lantern history. His site shows the fruit of his researches in a most spectacular and entertaining way—you won't be able to leave until you've explored its every nook and cranny! I learned a lot about the early history of projection that I have never seen elsewhere. Also look at Mervyn's 'Lantern of Fear' site! <http://www.grand-illusions.com/phntsmg.htm>

Victorian Magic Lanterns

<http://www.greenacre41.freemove.co.uk/index.html>

Also from UK, Derek Greenacre is the author of the small Shire book on magic lanterns which seems to crop up all over the place. His site is both charming and very useful, as he has included the catalogues of Butcher & Son (Primus Junior Lecturers' Series lantern slides), Lancaster's catalogue of slipping slides and several others which are hard to find anywhere, never mind in the peace of one's own home on line!

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Magic Lantern Related Internet Sites continued

Collecting Vintage Film Cameras and Projectors

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~wichm/cinemat.html>

This site belongs to Michael Rogge, a Dutch collector of early cinematography equipment. It is well laid out and very useful as a source of information and reference to anyone interested in early cinema. Michael has listed over 1,500 early film cameras and projectors, each identified and described, together with illustrations and descriptions of magic lantern material.

The Magic Lantern Gallery

<http://magiclanternsp.com/>

Don't expect to find much information on the history (there is some, of a somewhat doubtful authenticity), but if you want a beautiful picture based on fine long slides to hang on your wall, the photographic reproductions available here will please you. They look excellent, with fine, clear images of the type of slide you really would like to own!

The Projection Box

<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~sherbert/ProjectionBox.htm>

Stephen Herbert and Mo Heard have been running their own business in the UK for awhile now, and have been producing wonderful booklets, pamphlets, and indeed full-sized hard-back books on pre- and early cinema subjects. Their site lists all their currently available material and permits ordering by e-mail, though not directly on-line. If you don't know their publications, you really should visit the site! If you do, check back regularly for the latest releases! The site also pays tribute to the late-lamented (London) Museum of the Moving Image, with which both Stephen and Mo were closely identified, and has a fine Optical Gallery illustrating a number of items which used to be at MOMI.

Georg Füsslin

<http://www.fuesslin.de/>

This is the site of German book publisher Georg Füsslin, a magic lantern enthusiast and collector of optical toys himself. A number of books on the subject are listed. All are produced to the very highest standard, usually in German, and are thoroughly recommended. The illustrations alone are worth the money. Georg is a member of the (British) Magic Lantern Society.

De Luikerwaal

http://www.luikerwaal.com/index_uk.htm

Here is the site of Henc de Roos in the Netherlands. Another really fine Dutch site, this one listing more lantern slide catalogues as well as illustrating the history of the lantern.

The Magic Lantern Castle Museum

<http://www.magiclanterns.org/>

Jack Judson's Magic Lantern Castle site contains a brief history of the magic lantern, together with a most useful list of resources for future research. Recommended.

The Magic Lantern Society

<http://www.magiclantern.org.uk/contents.htm>

The site of The Magic Lantern Society—that is, the British society—contains a highly impressive and comprehensive nine-part account of the development from its origins around 1420 up to the arrival of the cinematograph and the brothers Lumiere, put together brilliantly by member George Aukland. There is evidence of some of Mervyn Heard's research there too.

The Magic Lantern Society of US and Canada

<http://www.magiclanternsociety.org/index.html>

Our own Magic Lantern Society of USA and Canada's site. Not much information about the magic lantern, but all you need to know about our Society and how to join it.

Ed. Note: The hope is that much more will be added to this site in the near future. The need is certainly there!

<http://www.fortunecity.co.uk/southbank/sculpture/13/index.html>

A spectacular British site put together by Dolly Whilems and Derek Adams. Concentrates on slides rather than lanterns, which it does superbly. There are sections on Good Night slides, Dissolving Views, animated slipping slides, slides of Java (not the animation applet type, though those are plentiful on this well-constructed site, but the country!), Phantasmagoria, Tiger and Tub, and a new section of Live Model slides. Slightly marred by irritating pop-up ads whenever you change pages, but I suppose they have to finance it somehow.



Japanese Magic Lantern site

<http://plaza.bunka.go.jp/bunka/museum/kikaku/exhibition02/english/index-e.html>

This is a fine site in English which describes the history of Utsushi-e projection (the Japanese art of using many lanterns simultaneously to build

up a scene on screen). It is achieved using back projection on to a Japanese paper screen mounted in a colorful proscenium, so the effect is not unlike live theatre. History is covered quite comprehensively, starting with the arrival of the magic lantern in Japan, brought by Dutch trading ships not long after its invention, and covering its independent development in Japan. An important contribution to lantern history.

The site is curated by Machiko Kushara with contributions from Erkki Huhtamo, who is currently occupying a place of importance in a California University. The site has a useful links page itself, including one to our Society!

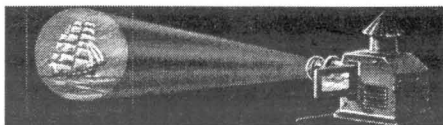
Also look at:

Minwa-za Japanese Magic Lanternists
<http://hrregw.hrrc.tsc.co.jp/~sanensin/unima/gekidan/minwa-za.html>

For those of you able to read Japanese (and have the right plug-in for your browser!) this is the site of the wonderful Minwa-za band of lanternists who provided such an outstanding entertainment for the British Magic Lantern Society Convention in Birmingham in April 2001. Some most interesting images of their balsa-wood lanterns and slides, together with a load of information that is lost on me, until I learn Japanese!

The Bill Douglas Centre
<http://info.ex.ac.uk/fac/arts/bill.douglas/>

The Bill Douglas Centre, now a part of the University of Exeter, UK, and based upon the collection of the late Bill Douglas, it contains an enormous collection relating to the history of film and visual media. From shadow puppets to Shirley Temple dolls, from magic lanterns to Marilyn Monroe postcards, there should be something to fascinate every visitor. And there is!



R.J. Noye's Photohistory SA site
http://www.capri.net.au/~rjnoye/Lantern/Lan_fset.htm

Lanterns, and other photographic items, from the South Australian perspective. The contents list is impressive: About Magic Lanterns, The lanterns, The Phantasmagoria, Lantern Slides, Sources of Light, Lanternists and Lantern Shows, Moving Panoramas and Dioramas. Parts of the site are still under construction, but it is already excellent, with beautiful images! The articles on Sources of Light are not easily found anywhere else and are quite comprehensive. This site is definitely worth keeping an eye on.

The Dead Media Project
<http://www.deadmedia.org/>
 The Dead Media Project researches many forms of dead media—including the magic lantern! How dead can you get? Suffice it to say that Stephen Herbert is involved with it, so it is a worthwhile site to visit.

George Eastman House
<http://www.geh.org/precin.html>
 The George Eastman House Pre-Cinema Project, together with a link to the George Eastman House main site is here. See what you will miss if you don't come to the next convention at Rochester, NY, in 2002!

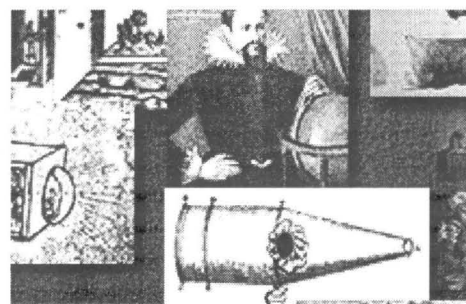
<http://www.cs.nott.ac.uk/~ef//lantern.html>

Eric Foxley's site operates in connection with the University of Nottingham, UK. Has some beautiful images on display together with a brief description of a Victorian lantern show.

<http://www.poppyland.co.uk/lantern/>

Another British site, this one is based on the Randall-Salter Collection of

lanterns and slides in Norfolk. School-teacher Alfred Salter collected the slides on behalf of the local Band of Hope, the temperance society for young people. Robert Randall, and later his son Harold Randall, would present the slides whilst Alfred Salter gave the readings. The site shows some fine images and a Victorian catalogue page of Salter's slides available for hire.



<http://www.precinemahistory.net/>
 The Complete History of the Discovery of Cinematography, researched, compiled and written by Paul T. Burns. that is what it says, and that is what it appears to be. The award-winning site covers 2,500 years starting in 900 BC, leading to cinematography in the 1800s. Visit it—you will be impressed!

<http://www.harappa.com/whj1.html>
 Ever heard of William Henry Jackson (1843-1942)? He was one of America's greatest early photographers. During his visit to India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, Jackson took a unique and stunning series of Photochroms and colored magic lantern slides. You can buy a CD-ROM of them here!

The Smithsonian Institute
<http://photo2.si.edu/cinema/cinema.html>

The Smithsonian Institute's Centennial Salute to Cinema starts with the magic lantern.

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Magic Lantern Related Internet Sites continued

Dutch Magic Lantern Site

<http://users.bart.nl/~locker/index.html>



Another Dutch site. Interesting. It suggests the inventor of the magic lantern might have been Chinese. There is an English version you can click on. Some images not readily found elsewhere.

The British Film Institute

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/>

The British Film Institute site has a link to the late-lamented Museum of the Moving Image, mostly trying (in vain . . .) to explain why it closed.

The Bioscope on the Fairground

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/projects/nfa/cinema/>

More about the early appearance of the bioscope on the British fairground than about lanterns as such. The site is constructed around Dr. Vanessa Toulmin's (of Sheffield University, UK) researches into Randall Williams, the King of Showmen. Nevertheless, well worth visiting.

Galantee So site

<http://www.jhenry.demon.co.uk/galantee.htm>

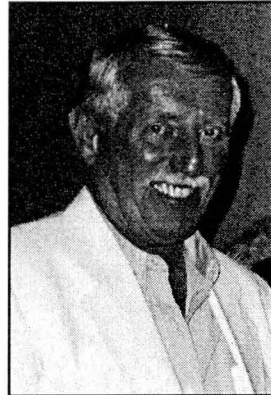
John-Henry Collinson and Kristine Reeves have compiled an interesting site which, they claim, is really for their chums and customers! It is nevertheless interesting and useful, not least for its excellent and on-going list of links to other sites! Well worth a visit. Their disclaimer amused me—much truth in it, though! "All web sites—including this one—are a species of vanity publishing. Treat them all—including this one—with caution."

The majority of sites, of course, have their own links to other sites, so you can pursue your own topic of interest around the Internet for months. Have fun doing it! 

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Ralph Shape

Oh, glorious summer. It's vacation time; school is out; the days are long; the weather's mostly great; every town has a festival and every corner has a flea market. Yes, we all enjoy summer but as we head into the fall we can appreciate one aspect of the shorter days. It's easier to show slides in the evening without darkening the room.



Plans are progressing for our tenth convention to be held in June 2002 in Rochester, New York. We'll be returning to the site of the first convention of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada that was held in August 1981. As at the first, this tenth convention will be hosted by Ed Lennert. We hope to again, make use of his college facilities and work in a visit to the George Eastman House Museum of Photography. For those of you who attended the first you may recall that the registration fee was \$10. And it was profitable. The total expenses for food, beverages, postage, and insurance totaled \$109; leaving a net profit of \$207. Presenters at that first convention included Ed Lennert, Jim Flanagan, Larry Rakow, Al Simon, John Jones, Nancy Bergh, Joe and Alice Koch, Dick Balzer, and Dennis Compton. In 2002 we hope to achieve the same successes and, perhaps, to even hear some of the same presenters. But, the most important thing we hope for the convention to achieve is to provide a venue for person-to-person contact with other lantern

people. It's a get together many of us look forward to, even before the last one is completed. Two years is a long time between meetings.

For those wondering about the dates; I had asked for opinions from many members as to June weekends for the convention. Some preferred the weekend of June 21-23 while most said either 21-23 or 28-30 would be fine. There were several for whom the earlier date was impossible. Based on that information I suggested to Ed that we work for the latter dates of June 28-30, 2002. I apologize to those I missed or who wished for the earlier dates. I hope to see you all in Rochester.

In April many of our members journeyed to Birmingham, England to celebrate the 25th anniversary of The Magic Lantern Society at their 6th convention. Three days of outstanding presentations and displays along with a spectacular banquet and an auction filled with goodies for all tastes made the weekend pass all too quickly. Our fellow lantern enthusiasts across the ocean can be proud of the grand program they put on, which, not only enthralled the attendees but impressed the city of Birmingham as well.

Many of our members have been putting on shows for their local communities. When you do, drop a note to the Halls. We would like to hear of your successes in teaching the public about the magic lantern. As Joe Koch always said, "That's what this society is all about." Preserve the history. Keep up the good work.

May your lantern shine brightly throughout the year. 

MAGIC GLASS HOUSES

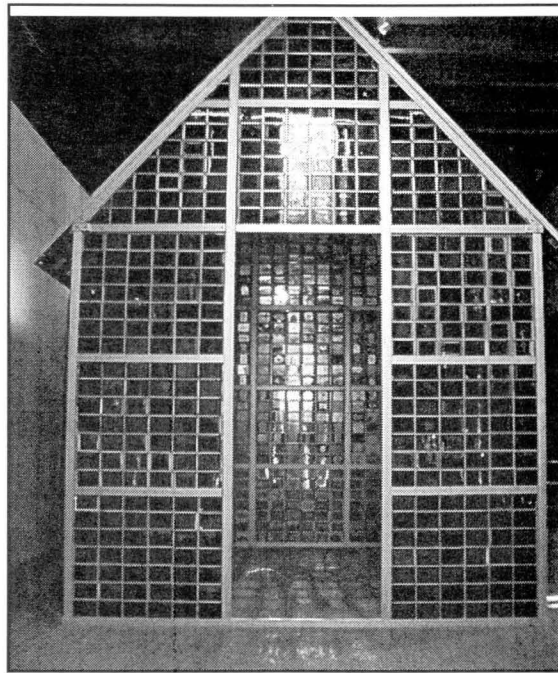
By Steve Tobin

I am an artist working in many materials such as blown glass, cast bronze, steel, and clay. I use many found objects to build shelters and construct my "new nature" sculptures. I have used a truckload of Buffalo bones donated from the North American bison coop, steel fireworks launching tubes, millions of feet of donated medical glass tubing, 400 cases of matzo bread turned into bronze for the "metzo house," and 1,000 M60 tank windows for the adobe. I like reusing discarded or overlooked materials and blending art and artifact. Recently I discovered glass lantern slides.

A year ago I went to a flea market in New Jersey and met an interesting man named Antonio selling glass lantern slides. I had never before seen glass lantern slides. They were 3.25 by 4 inches and cased in metal, stunning hand painted birds. I bought them all (100) and made a small house with them. Inside the house I placed a bronzed bird laying on a piece of marble.

I was so pleased with the piece, I called Antonio to see if he had more. It turns out that he had purchased 15,000 slides from the widow of a man who had collected slides for 40 years. When he died she was ready to throw them away feeling (as many spouses do) that their partner's hobbies take up too much time, space, and money. Antonio did not really want to part with the whole collection but as coincidence would have it he was an artist who not only knew my artwork but was a fan as well. We traded some of my art and some extra money and overnight I was the caretaker of a man's 40 year obsession with lantern slides.

I felt an awesome responsibility to learn about the 300 boxes of carefully organized and labeled slides. I began to preserve and promote them



by using my art as a vehicle to reach as many people as possible. At the same time I started doing research on them on the Internet and hired a research assistant from Brown University to find out more about them.

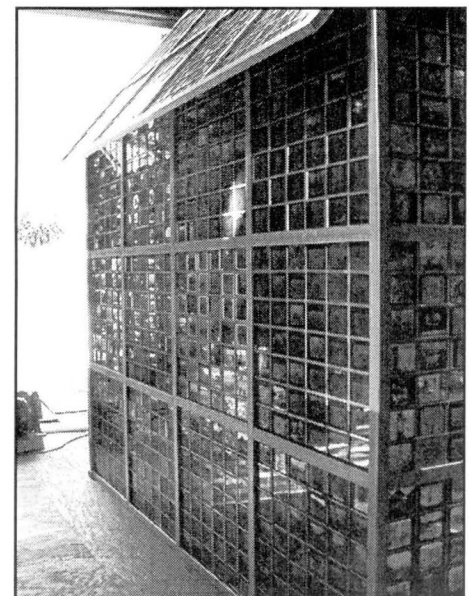
I have recently finished a 6 by 8 foot "Lantern House" 11 feet high, using many thousands of slides held together with zinc channels. The slides are removable if need be. I do not expose the "Lantern House" to ambient or direct sunlight using only a single MR16 halogen floodlight to illuminate. It is also quite dramatic with a single candle inside. The external halogen light projects the images on the people standing inside.

I plan to exhibit the "Lantern House" in a range of places including universities, art museums, natural history museums, and public places. I am currently negotiating exhibitions with the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the United Nations, as well as several other venues. I expect that in the next five years the "Lantern Houses" will be seen by hundreds of thousands if not millions of people. I also expect to have major features in *Smithsonian* magazine, *Natural History* magazine, and many others that

will highlight the "Lantern House." In the last two years I have been featured in *People* magazine, *Newsweek* magazine, the cover of *Ceramics Monthly*, *Glass* magazine, and *Sculpture* magazine to name a few. So glass lantern slides are going to be exposed to a lot of people that, like me, had never seen or heard of them before.

I have since collected 20,000 more slides from a variety of sources often trading my art for large collections. It seems that many people save them for no reason other than they don't want to throw them away. My project offers a good opportunity

for them to put the slides to a unique use. My project is very ambitious and I hope to acquire 100,000 slides in total to make several more "Lantern Houses." I basically make two sizes; 20 inches high with one theme and 11 feet high with a range of themes. My favorite slides are colored ranging from butterflies, a Leper colony, Japan, bugs, anthropology, medical, flowers, and odd science. I use any and every slide that I can find. I want to show the entire range of



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Magic Glass Houses continued

subjects that these slides contain hoping to capture the flavor of a lost era; a kind of time travel.

I feel a great respect for lantern slides, the information they contain and the history they represent. People know so little about the magnificent time of the lantern slide that paved the way for motion pictures. An entire era was captured and is now all but discarded along with these slides. Maybe if more people today looked at these lantern slide images, the values of that discarded era might not be lost. This is the purpose of my artwork. I want to encourage people to look into the shadows, see the obvious that we have become immune to, and bring more cultural richness into our daily lives.

Collecting and showing lantern slides has been one of the most joyous obsessions I have embarked on in my life and I expect to be a lifelong enthusiast! If anybody has extra slides of any subject to trade for artwork (they do need to be pristine) please contact me . . . Steve Tobin.

To see more images of the lantern house go to www.stevetobin.com.

Ed. Note: Steve is currently working with Ed Lennert to see if it can be arranged to display one of his glass houses at the 2002 convention. Here is a footnote from a previous e-mail we received early on from Steve.

"I can use as many colored insects, butterflies, birds, and animals as possible (thousands) . . . colored slides of indigenous people also in large numbers, and colored nature slides. I use about three black and white slides for each colored one. Faded color slides work well for me too. I am willing to consider any images but I need lots of each theme to make a house. The themes of the houses are quite simply to capture nature or original culture that has been or is being extinguished by overpopulation of modern society."



MEMBERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Washington, DC (July 16)—The Flea Market at Eastern Market was among ten markets chosen for filming *A Flea Market Documentary*, which will air soon on PBS stations around the country, Flea Market Manager Tom Rall announced.

"I am extremely pleased that the documentary's producers have chosen our market for inclusion in the special," said Rall, who has managed and promoted the Sunday flea market for nearly 20 years in conjunction with the Market 5 Gallery, a nonprofit arts organization at Eastern Market, the historic Capitol Hill food market which has been in operation since 1873.

"Inclusion in *A Flea Market Documentary* should celebrate the urban cultural diversity we have encouraged at the Sunday Flea Market," Rall said. "We believe our market is one of the best in the world and appreciate that PBS has recognized us along with some of the other great flea markets in the United States. We're much smaller than the others in numbers of exhibitors, so the quality of our merchants must stand out."

WQED Pittsburgh's Rick Sebak, who shot at the Eastern Market flea last July, produced the program, "Whenever I'm in Washington on a weekend, I go to The Flea Market at Eastern Market on Sunday," said Sebak, who has produced several other PBS specials on American life.

Noting that the DC Government is attempting to evict Market 5 Gallery from management of the outdoor market under a law passed recently, Rall said, "I hate to be forced out of my life's work, but I'll have another nice memory" if the eviction is upheld by courts. "Unfortunately, it appears I'll lose all of the

considerable investment of time and money I've put into development of the market," he lamented.

A Flea Market Documentary was scheduled to premier on PBS Monday, July 30 at 9:00 p.m. reported Associate Producer Minette Seate. In the DC area it will run initially as scheduled on WETA, Channel 26. It will first be aired on Saturday August 4 at 3:30 p.m. by WMPT, Channel 22.

For more information, contact Rall, 703-534-7612 (marketflea@aol.com) or Seate, 412-622-1585. On the web, information about the market is found at www.easternmarket.net.

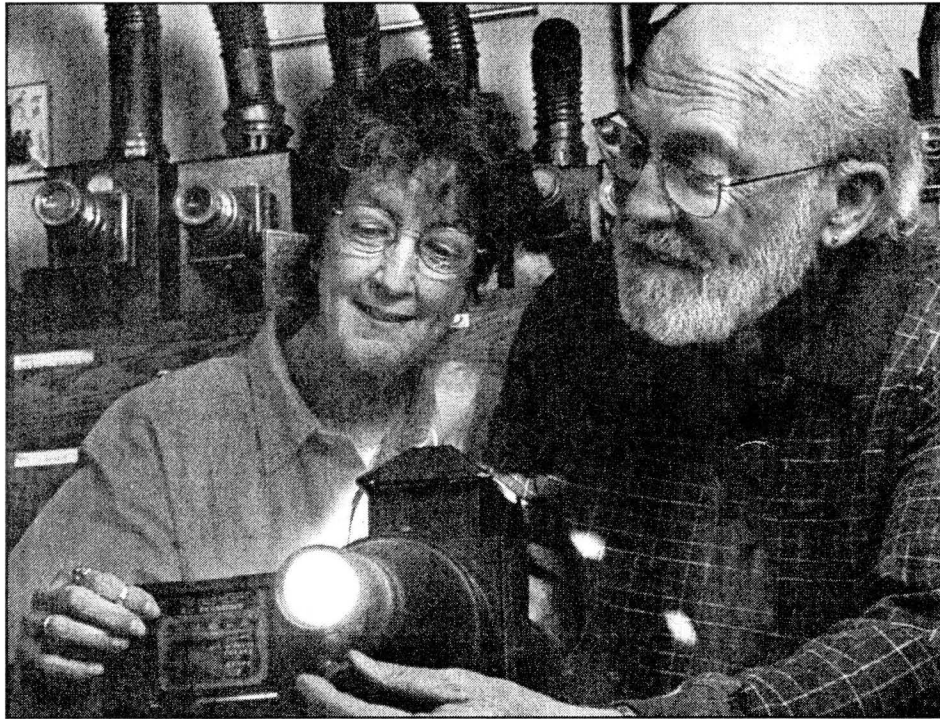
Ed. Note: After watching this PBS special the editors are eager to visit Tom some Sunday at Eastern Market. What fun to see him on TV.



COLLECTING MAGIC

BOB AND SUE HALL'S ANTIQUE PROJECTORS SHED LIGHT ON 19TH-AND EARLY 20TH-CENTURY CULTURE

The News Tribune, May 29, 2001



The projector did not fully illuminate for Hall until 1985, when he married Sue and they moved from Puyallup to Gig Harbor. "We came up Peacock Hill while moving in and saw a garage sale," Bob Hall said. "There was a box with a magic lantern and Victorian childhood slides. Bought the box for \$40."

"We needed stuff for the house and he's interested in this stupid magic lantern stuff," Sue Hall said. "I thought I knew something about antiques, but I'd never heard of this. But I could see how excited and interested Bob was."

It was the first of Bob Hall's 250 magic lanterns. His prize is a mahogany and brass beauty, made by T.H. Yardley Co. of England, and called a biennial. It has two lens, does dissolves and special effects, and cost \$2,500 at a Christie's auction.

Before movies or television, there was a magic lantern. Developed about 1640, popularized in the 1800s, a prime entertainment early in the last century, magic lanterns were ornate wood and glass projectors, illuminated by a kerosene flame. The flickering lamp enlarged images from a glass slide on a screen or sheet hung in a theater, auditorium, or a rustic setting like summer woods at Mount Rainier.

When "The Great Train Robbery," the first full-length movie, was released in 1905 and spawned nickelodeon theaters, magic lanterns dimmed into hobbydom. Collectors number 500 globally, including 150 in North America and eight around Puget Sound.

"This is the only place in the United States where there is a concentrated number of collectors," said Sue Hall of Gig Harbor, who owns Purple Sage Antiques with her husband, Bob. The Halls have one of the world's fore-

most magic lantern collections and were among 600 antiques dealers at the Tacoma Dome Antique & Collectible Show.

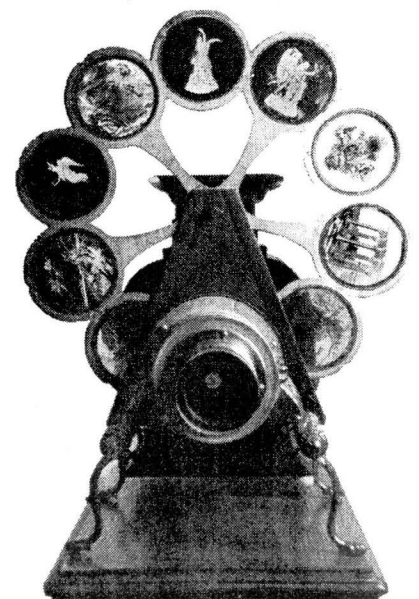
"It's like computers," Sue Hall said. "There's hardware and software. Robert likes the hardware, the projectors. I like the software, the slides." She is a retired Sumner High School principal. He is a retired Bremerton High counselor.

Magic lanterns first flared for Bob Hall in 1958, when he was a science and math teacher at Kendrick (Idaho) High. Principal Keith Clear invited Hall to his home for a pizza dinner and an evening of lantern slides, accompanied by music on an Edison phonograph.

"A blurb was written up in the Kendrick Gazette's social column," Bob Hall said, "that the Keith Clears entertained Robert Hall at their home with magic lantern slides."

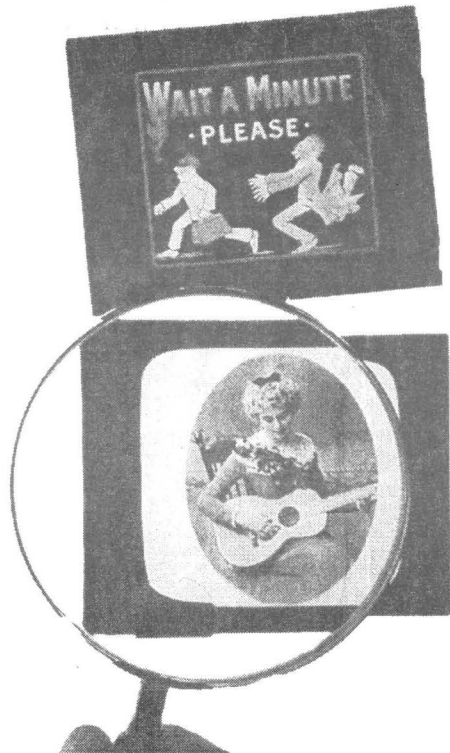
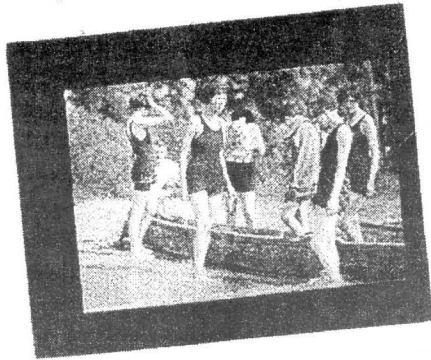
"I like the uniqueness, their age, the scarcity, and especially the fact that hardly anybody has ever heard of them," he said.

"Plus," Sue Hall said, "they were hard to find. Robert is an acquirer. When we first started collecting, we bought



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Collecting Magic continued



Slides from the collection of Bob and Sue Hall include, from top, an advertisement for a piano store, bathing beauties, theatrical information and an image of a woman playing a guitar.

everything. We have pieces of stuff we'll never get rid of."

The slides are glass. They measure $3\frac{1}{4}$ by 4 inches American-made, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches square if British. Some are hand-colored.

Topics in the Nineteenth Century emphasized travel—wonders such as the Egyptian pyramids or the Eiffel Tower. Slides might tell a story, such as Alice in Wonderland or Mother Goose nursery rhymes. Slides could be advertising for a hotel or restaurant in a town that had a theater.

The Halls crave the slides called coming attractions—advertisements for Ringling Bros. Circus, a vaudeville show at the Pantages, a boxing match at Tacoma Armory, even the annual Turkey Day football game between Lincoln and Stadium High Schools, played in the early '30s.

Coming attractions were produced into the 1940s. When a movie theater projectionist changed reels, he often showed coming attractions on a lantern projector. Those annoying ads in today's theaters—commercials to buy cars, ploys to get you to buy snacks in the lobby—are latter-day versions of lantern slides.

A historian, world traveler, and lantern slide collector named Joe Koch, founder of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada, lived in Auburn and died last year at 79. Koch gave the Halls some tips for this singular hobby.

One trick is to tape a business card to a projector that's for sale in an antique store. The Halls left their card on a projector in Canyonville, Oregon. "Somebody in New Mexico saw our card and called to say he had two uncles who were projectionists," Sue Hall said. "When movies came in, people threw away their coming attractions slides. But the uncles saved them."

The Halls bought all 3,500 of the uncles slides for \$2,500. Bob Hall said he believes the collection is worth at least \$50,000. The Halls recently sold one coming attraction slide, advertising Houdini's imminent arrival, for \$2,400 on eBay.

"The uniqueness of the lantern slides is why I collect," Bob Hall said. "You look at these slides and there's a crystal-clear image of somebody who's been dead for 100 years."

"Whatever we've collected has always been Robert's interest at first," Sue Hall said. "But I'm one of the world's more competitive people. Once you start with the slides, you want the most of the best... I like the slides. I love the slides." 

BITS AND PIECES

1 At least once a year the editors are fortunate to have a visit from Leslie, David, and/or Michael Evans from the UK. They are usually accompanied by large, empty suitcases which they fill for the return trip with their eBay purchases which they have had posted to our house for safekeeping. Earlier in the year we received a package of slides they had purchased from Henry Clark. An e-mail from Henry came at that time:

"Recently, through eBay, I sold to a nice British family 14 pieces of corrugated cardboard. The family asked that the corrugated cardboard be sent not to them, but to you, since your enthusiasm for corrugated cardboard is a benchmark among corrugated cardboard collectors both east and west of the Mississippi. (As you know, British corrugated cardboard is a sad and flimsy thing, as a result of a war-time rationing of corrugation that has yet to be lifted.) (The Brits, I believe, were only permitted to start purchasing rubber again in 1999,

when a court decided that Hitler was officially dead, and the only reason the population of the Isles hasn't become a Malthusian nightmare is the remarkable British Reserve.)

The 14 pieces of corrugated cardboard measure 4" x 7", and have been sandwiched between some wood-mount magic lantern slides for protection during shipping. The entire lot shipped yesterday, February 17.

Should you try to enter the UK with this parcel, and have to pass through British customs (which are obviously not our customs) please beware of the Corrugated-Cardboard Sniffing Dogs, (or "Corgis," for short)."

Sincerely yours,
Henry Clark

2 Directory change
—new address: Nat Myers
718 Crowfields lane
Asheville, NC 28803

3 Another Magic Lantern web site is that of William Carroll. We have included it in past issues: acrbooks@concentric.net

He describes it thus, "This company started in 1969 as Antique Camera Repair, servicing antique and classic cameras. This continued until the late 1980s when I stopped the repair business and started ACR Books. It was renamed ACR Book Service in 1995 to better define what it was all about. In 1999 I sold ACR Book Service to Petra Kellers in Boulder Creek. In that sale I retained all the books in the Magic Lantern category—they will be found here under the same category. This category contains books on magic lanterns, optical toys, pre-cinema development, and kaleidoscopes.

I also sell antique and used books on photographica and collectable cameras but there is no list at present. I have a quantity of kaleidoscopes available—no list. Please e-mail or call me

with your requirements or questions. I expect to have lists of these items that I could e-mail upon request.

4 Tom Rall is on vacation and so his column, Photographic Lantern Slides, will not appear this issue. We promise it will resume in the December issue. 

MLS—MINUTES FOR THE NORTHWEST CORNER

January 28, 2001

Present for the delicious lunch, and meeting at Bob and Sue Hall's were Bob Doran, Sharon Koch, Ralph and Judie Shape, Larry Ceberblom, and Marvin Nauman.

President Ralph opened the meeting at 1:15 p.m. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved and the treasurer's report was presented. Meeting schedule is: Bob & Carm Bishop, May 20th; Ralph and Judie Shape, August 12th; Marvin Nauman, November 4th (tentative).

News From the Members/Show & Tell: Ralph related that sadly, we have lost two more members, Barbara Harris, and Harvey Becker. We will all miss them. When sharing our memories, Sue remembered that Barbara and her husband, John-Edward, had told the story of stopping at a garage sale by the side of the road and buying a triunial for something like \$25!!!

Ralph also reported that Mike Smith has 60 lots of Civil War slides on the HCA historical auction AOL priced at a minimum bid of \$65 per set.

Mike also sent along an invitation to the 6th Annual International Convention of The Magic Lantern Society, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the society's foundation. The convention was held in Birmingham, England on April 27th through 29th. They are selling the newly published "Encyclopedia of Magic Lanterns" at

a cost of 45 English pounds. Several of us expressed interest in purchasing the book.

Sue and Bob Hall are our new celebrities! They were pictured in the antique newsletter *Oldstuff*, which of course, doesn't at all reflect on their age! Great picture!

Sue and Bob received an e-mail from Bob Skell, who has sold his computer business and intends to dedicate more time to magic lanterns. Good luck in those endeavors, Bob.

Sue read a letter from Dorothy and Elgin Smith. Elgin is doing better and they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on November 28th, 2000. We saluted their accomplishment and wished them good health!

Member, Ron Krueger, had three Houdini slides, asked Sue where they had sold theirs, and then proceeded to sell one of his for \$1,000! Good job, Ron!

There is a web page (Antique Diary) where one can find out about any antique fairs going on in England. (Antiques-Atlas?)

Information from Jack Judson: there was an article in the British Society newsletter about the Magic Lantern Castle, and also one on our convention in Hollywood. Jack felt that Erkki Huhtamo, who submitted the articles, did a fine job. Jack also mentioned that he had just bought 15,000 slides from a school. He suggested featuring members and their collections in the *Gazette*, plus a question/answer section.

In that vein, Tom Rall has agreed to write a regular column on photographic slides.

Dorothy Easterday saw our society, with Ralph as contact person, listed in the most current issue of an organization list. Ron purchased a book in

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Minutes for NW Corner continued

Victoria, BC, *The Manual of Photography*, which contains a section on lantern slides and transparencies. They also brought tissue stereopticon slides.

Sharon read a letter from Helen Petty, a former member. Sharon asked about whether we could put together a welcome/information packet for new members. After much discussion, we decided to put something together to present at the next meeting.

Marvin Nauman stated that he might be showing us some pictures of stagecoach views when we meet at his home in November.

Bob Doran showed us his eBay purchase, a magic lantern made by Enterprize, run by gas. Quite unusual.

Larry Ceberblom bought some advertising slides on CD, which he has reproduced into slides. He passed around a book of wonderful Victorian pictures, which included lanterns.

The committee working on our web site submitted some ideas. (List could not be found.) The committee will continue to obtain ideas from the membership and report at the next meeting.

There was some discussion about the cost of ads in the *Gazette*. It was reiterated that advertisements are a member benefit, and there is no charge to members in good standing.

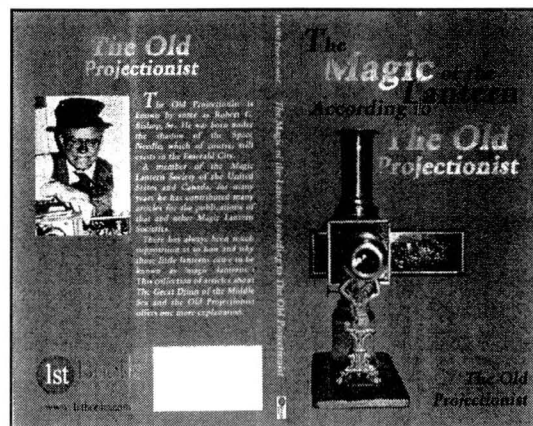
Dorothy shared her personally organized book of Oz collectibles and received accolades from everyone on her great job and presentation.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. and we went downstairs to see Bob Hall's movie greeting slide, followed by missionary slides, accompanied by Sue's missionary voice! Ralph viewed various mysterious historical personalities along the line of the early TV show "To Tell the Truth." Great entertainment!

PROUD TO ANNOUNCE

Bob Bishop, The Old Projectionist, has authored a book. The cover is shown below. He tells us that "The Magic of the Lantern" is available from First Book Library by telephone. Call 1-888-280-7715 and give them the author's name and the name of the book, and ISBN 75962-193-4. The book is printed on demand—a single copy or more as desired. Delivery is from five to seven business days.

This is a collection of articles about The Great Djinn of the Middle Sea and the Old Projectionist offering an explanation about how magic lanterns came to be.



WANTED

Condenser lens, outside diameter about $4\frac{1}{2}$ " in chrome or nickel silver, thickness about $2\frac{1}{8}$ ". May have a small flange at one end. For *The Enterprise Lantern*. Ideally a matching pair, but will buy a single one! Shipping only required within the USA.

David Evans

40 West St., Alresford, SO24 9AU, UK

e-mail: devans7331@aol.com

Phone: 01144 1730 894086

FOR SALE

Fellow Magic Lantern Society Members. We wish to sell our collection. We wish to sell in a complete lot and you will have to come to Northwest Wyoming to pick it up.

Items: Toy 35mm movie projector-hand cranked, EP lantern, EP electric lantern, JP slide lantern, Dreadnaught electric lantern, Keystone electric, Pathex electric, NIC (paper film/child's toy), Magic Lanterns - all different sizes, no repeats, 6 EP-square, 2 EP-Barrel. Unknown manufacturers: 4 - Round vertical, 4 - Square lanterns-different sizes. All sizes and types of slides including movie previews and lots of miscellaneous items. 2 Postcard projectors, 1 Leitz - classroom projector. Textbook on Optic Projection by Gage, 700 plus pages, published 1914. Excellent shape.

Estimated value of over \$3,000. Will sell entire collection for \$2,000. Also have extensive stereo collection and coin-operated machines: mutoscopes, stereo viewers, etc. Have a few phonographs; cylinder, etc.

Brian Parks

Box 3168

Alpine, WY 83128

307-654-7779

skookum@silverstar.com